

21 November 1961

L-23510

Mr. Carroll Jean Bowen
University of Chicago Press
5750 Ellis Avenue
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Mr. Bowen:

I visit Los Angeles occasionally to answer my mail, most of which usually appears to be about one month old. Your last letter to me turns out to have been in a separate file, where it escaped attention on my last couple of sweeps. Although it may seem implausible to say that I am very embarrassed by this -- since I am afraid that my past record with you has not been significantly better -- I really am.

Although my work this year is no excuse for my tardiness in answering letters, it is a pretty good excuse for my not finishing books. I have spent most of the year away from home, two months in the Caribbean and the Far East and about 4 or 5 months in Washington. The book, if it ever is finished, should in the end be better for this experience, since I have been engaged in organizing coercion or encountering it, not just writing about it. (In fact, my proudest moment came from having had some influence on a speech which Malinovsky felt called upon to announce publicly had not scared him.)

At the moment I am engaged in work, part of which will emerge as a dissertation for Harvard on decision-making under conditions of ignorance, i. e., situations of extreme uncertainty, in which information is scanty, vague or conflicting. Since many conflict and bargaining situations fall into this class, I hope to be able to apply my results in this area to my earlier work on coercion. I hope to return to the latter area when I finish my dissertation around February, but I will certainly have nothing to report in that line till then.

Thank you again for your interest.

Sincerely,

Daniel Ellsberg

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